

**REMARKS**

Claims 1, 4, 6, 11 and 12 have been canceled. Claims 3 and 5 have been amended to depend on claim 13. Claim 7 has been amended to recite that in the claimed combination of at least two batteries connected in series "the at least two batteries connected in series are connected so that the negative electrode terminal of one battery directly contacts the positive electrode terminal of the other battery". Claim 10 has been amended to correct the preamble. A new claim, claim 14 has been added to the application which limits the battery can of [each of] the at least two batteries connected in series to a cylindrical battery can.

The amendments to the claims are believed to place this application in condition for allowance.

Claims 4 and 6 which are objected to in the Action have been canceled.

Claim 1, which is again rejected in the Action as being unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Hanafusa et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,531,246) (hereinafter: "Hanafusa") in view of Yamazaki et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,632,538) (hereinafter: "Yamazaki") has been canceled. Claim 7, which is also rejected in the Action as being unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Hanafusa in view of Yamazaki has been amended as

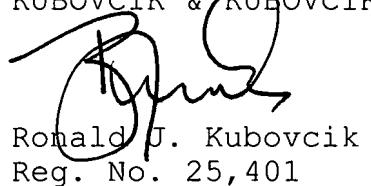
kindly suggested in the Action to precisely recite that in the claimed combination of at least two batteries connected in series the at least two batteries connected in series are connected so that the negative electrode terminal of one battery directly contacts the positive electrode terminal of the other battery. Claim 7 is now believed to distinguish over the references.

Claim 13 is indicated in the Action to be allowed.

A notice of allowability is believed to be in order and is respectfully requested.

In the event that this paper is not considered to be timely filed, applicants hereby petition for an appropriate extension of time. The fee for any such extension and any additional required fees can be charged to Deposit Account No. 111833.

Respectfully submitted,  
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